

"The Siriono also recognize that under extreme conditions of fright miscarriages are more likely [67] to occur. One interesting instance of this kind, although it was not observed by me, came to my attention while I was living in Tibaera. Sometime in 1938 one of the amphibian planes of Lloyd Aéreo Boliviano, the Bolivian national airline, got lost in a storm between Cochabamba and Trinidad and for lack of gas was forced to land on an uncharted lake in the Siriono country. It so happened that Erésá-eánta (Strong-eyes), his five wives, and their children were camped on this lake at the time, hunting, fishing, and tending a small garden plot which he cultivated there. It was probably the first time that an unacculturated Siriono had ever seen an airplane; in any event, Erésá-eánta and his family were unacquainted with such a phenomenon.

As Erésá-eánta described the event to me, he was returning from the hunt late one afternoon to his house, which was situated near the shores of the lake, when he heard a buzzing sound some distance away. As it became louder he got frightened and hurried on to the house. When he arrived there, he saw a huge ngidadíša (harpy eagle, his term for the plane) swooping down on the lake. When it had settled, people got out of its 'stomach.' He and his family were immediately seized with terrific fright and took to the bush, carrying with them nothing but their hammocks and fire. Upon arriving at a water hole some distance away, they were overcome by darkness and were forced to camp for the night. Sometime during the night, one of his wives who was pregnant—Kiré was her name, and she verified the story—had a miscarriage, 'because she had

great fear.' The remains of this abnormal birth were thrown away into the bush. On the following day Erésá-eánta's wives proceeded to another camp, while he cautiously approached the lake again to pick up some of the supplies left there. Upon arriving, he found that 'ngidadísa' was still there, and he watched it for some time while hidden in the brush near the shore. Before noon of the same day the 'father' of the 'ngidadísa' i. e., a larger plane, flew over the spot but left immediately. Erésá-eánta remained concealed in the brush. Later in the afternoon a 'brother' of the first 'ngidadísa,' i. e., a plane like it, circled overhead and landed near it. This also had people in its 'belly.' After the people conversed for some time, both of the planes went off together, and he never saw them again. He said that he returned to his family the same afternoon, but that he did not come back to the lake for a long time afterward. More than 3 years later I had the good fortune to spend considerable time with one of the worried passengers of that plane, Señor Medardo Solares A., who substantially confirmed the events as recounted to me by Erésá-eánta."

1: Holmberg--77 [6]
116, 828, 865

(1941-42) 1950

Siriono

"Children are generally allowed great license in expressing aggression against their parents, who are both patient and long-suffering with them. A young child in a temper tantrum may ordinarily beat his father and his mother as hard as he can, and they will just laugh. When children are neglected or teased by their parents, they often pick up a spindle or stick and strike them with considerable force without being punished. I have even heard fathers encouraging their young sons to strike their mothers. Eantádu told me that such expressions of anger in a child were a sign that he would grow up to be a valiant adult."

1: Holmberg--86 [2]
116, 753, 774, 828

(1941-42) 1950

Siriono

"In a confused sense there is also a belief that disease is caused by the absence of soul. A person's soul may leave his body while he is dreaming, and if it does much wandering during the night, he is apt to be tired and ill the following day. Informants frequently told me that they were ill because their souls had been 'hunting' or 'walking' the night before."

"Dreams are thought to be caused by absence and wandering of the soul. Generally they are believed to presage the future. Hunters who dream about hunting a certain animal believe that this is a sign that they will kill one, and after such a dream they often go on a successful chase. One night Eantádu dreamed that he killed a tapir. Early the following morning, he departed for the hunt and returned late in the afternoon having bagged his prize. He told me that he knew he was going to shoot a tapir because he had dreamed about it. Such experiences are common among the Siriono and strongly reinforce the belief that dreams foretell the future.

If dreams are an unconscious expression of desires, then those of the Siriono clearly reflect their preoccupation with the quest for food. While I was only able to record data on some 50 dreams, more than 25 of these are related directly to the eating of food, the hunting of game, and the collecting of edible products from the forest. An especially common type is one in which a person dreams that a relative who is out hunting, has had luck and is returning to camp with game for him. Enía, for example, had a dream that Eantádu, who was out on the chase, killed a great many peccaries and was returning to camp with broiled peccary meat for him. Another recurring type of dream is one in which a person himself is out hunting, and kills and eats a great deal of game. Kénda reported a dream in which he was hunting fish in a certain lagoon and shooting huge quantities. His brother was with him, and they roasted and ate fish until they could not move. Dreams also reflect strong desires to eat certain kinds of food. Before the

1: Holmberg--91 [2]

(1941-42) 1950

Siriono-2

116, 154, 787, 828

ripening of the coquino fruit, which is greatly relished because of its sugar content, Ai-a dreamed that she was in the forest collecting with her husband and that they encountered coquino trees loaded with ripe fruit, which they ate until they were stuffed."

2: Holmberg--180 [2]
116, 151, 828, 831

(1941-42) 1946

Siriono

"Romantic love is a concept foreign to the Siriono. Sex, like hunger, is a drive to be satisfied. Consequently it is neither much inhibited by attitudes of modesty and decorum, nor much enhanced by ideals of beauty and charm. The expression šečubi ('I like') is applied indiscriminately to everything that is enjoyable, whether it be food to eat, a necklace to wear, or a woman to sleep with. There are, of course, certain ideals of erotic bliss, but under conditions of disire those readily break down, and the Siriono are content to conform to the principle of 'any port in a storm.'"